EXHBIT: _____*9*_____ *4 pages*

Academic Degree Training Documentation

Interpretive Guidance for Project Manager Positions   CG03-0001 August 2003

Ranking Qualified Applicants

Quality ranking factors are KSAs/competencies that significantly enhance performance in a position, but, unlike selective factors, are not essential for satisfactory performance. Agencies should rank applicants with higher proficiency levels on a quality ranking factor above those with lower proficiency levels. Agencies may not rate qualified candidates ineligible solely for failure to possess a quality ranking factor. With quality ranking factors, the focus is on the level of proficiency the candidate brings to the job.

Justification and Documentation

Agencies must document both selective factors and quality ranking factors through job analysis by identifying the:

- KSAs/competencies basic to and essential for satisfactory job performance;
- Duties/tasks the incumbent will perform that require possessing the required KSAs/competencies; and
- Education, experience, or other qualifications that provide evidence of the possession of the required KSAs/competencies.

Considering Certification

OPM has not established certification requirements for Project Manager positions. However, agencies may specify a particular type of certification (or equivalency) in establishing selective criteria or in defining quality ranking factors. Subject matter experts must determine that the certification is necessary for satisfactory job performance (i.e., the certification is related to the duties/tasks and required KSAs/competencies of the job). The certification may then be used as evidence that a person has the KSAs/competencies needed to perform project management work at a satisfactory level.

Training and Developing Project Managers

Credentials and Academic Degrees

Agencies may establish career development programs in which employees can move through a series of increasingly more responsible project management assignments. Sometimes these career programs include opportunities for rotational assignments that help broaden the employee's perspective. In addition, formal training (both Government-sponsored and commercial courses) may cover aspects of project management. Individual courses may be organized into formal programs that lead to academic degrees or that help employees become eligible for a specific credential. In any instance, agencies need to ensure that courses and training adhere to established procedures and guidelines, especially as the law now authorizes agencies to fund credentials and academic degree training. **Agencies are reminded that they may pay for formal programs that lead to academic degrees only if the academic institution is accredited by an organization approved by the U.S. Department of Education.**

Credentials

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 enacted into law changes in chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code. Now, 5 U.S.C. 5757 provides that an agency may pay for "(1) expenses for employees to obtain professional credentials, including expenses for professional accreditation, State-imposed and professional licenses, and professional certification; and (2) examinations to obtain such credentials."

This law goes on to require that this authority "may not be exercised on behalf of any employee occupying or seeking to qualify for appointment to any position that is excepted from the competitive service because of the confidential, policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character of the position."

Academic Degree Training

The Homeland Security Act of 2002 expanded agency authority to pay for academic degree training. Now, 5 U.S.C. 4107 provides that "An agency may select and assign an employee to academic degree training and may pay or reimburse the costs of academic degree training from appropriated or other available funds if such training:

- Contributes significantly to (A) meeting an identified agency training need; (B) resolving an identified agency staffing problem; or (C) accomplishing goals in the strategic plan of the agency;

- Is part of a planned, systemic, and coordinated agency employee development program linked to accomplishing the strategic goals of the agency; and

- Is accredited and is provided by a college or university that is accredited by a nationally recognized body.

The new 5 U.S.C. 4107 goes on to require that the agency:

- Consistent with the merit system principles set forth in paragraphs (2) and (7) of section 2301(b), take into consideration the need to (A) maintain a balanced workforce in which women, members of racial and ethnic minority groups, and persons with disabilities are appropriately represented in Government service; and (B) provide employees effective education and training to improve organizational and individual performance;

- Assure that the training is not for the sole purpose of providing an employee an opportunity to obtain an academic degree or qualify for appointment to a particular position for which the academic degree is a basic requirement;

- Assure that no authority under this subsection is exercised on behalf of any employee occupying or seeking to qualify for (A) a noncareer appointment in the Senior Executive Service; or (B) appointment to any position that is excepted from the competitive service because of its confidential policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character; and

- To the greatest extent practicable, facilitate the use of online degree training.

The Gov Online Learning Center

The Gov Online Learning Center (**http://www.golearn.gov**) is a Governmentwide e-Training site dedicated to one-stop access to high quality e-Training courses, tools, and services to the Federal workforce. The Gov Online Learning Center is a one-stop portal leading to many tools and resources that can assist in developing an IT Project Manager. Many of these resources are available at no cost to Federal IT employees and provide continuous learning and resources for developing basic IT Project Manager competencies. You can access the Gov Online Learning Center at **http://www.golearn.gov**, explore the site, and register to take courses.

A future enhancement, the Gov Online Learning Center's **Competency Management Center** will provide employees with tools to help manage their career development and will help supervisors and managers with the strategic development of human capital. The first career path in the Competency Management Center will be the IT function and the GS-2210 occupational series. This is the result of a joint development effort with the Chief Information Officers Council (**http://www.cio.gov**). Persons interested in the IT profession will be able to review competencies identified for a variety of recognized career paths, assess their proficiencies in these competencies, and identify appropriate training and development opportunities to develop the needed competencies. In addition, the tool allows the user to select a third party to provide an independent assessment of proficiency in relevant competencies.

Further Guidance

This guidance will help you classify and fill project manager positions, as well as develop project managers. If you have questions about this guide, contact our offices as follows:

- Position classification matters at **fedclass@opm.gov**
- Employment or staffing issues at **eswebmaster@opm.gov**
- Training and employee development topics at **hrd@opm.gov**

Instructions for Optional Application for Federal Employment - OF 612

You may apply for most Federal jobs with a resume, an Optional Application for Federal Employment (OF 612), or other written format. If your resume or application does not provide all the information requested on this form and in the job vacancy announcement, you may lose consideration for a job. Type or print clearly in black ink. Help speed the selection process by keeping your application brief and sending only the requested information. **If essential to attach additional pages, include your name and Social Security Number on each page.**

• For information on Federal employment, including alternative formats for persons with disabilities and veterans' preference, contact the U.S. Office of Personnel Management at 478-757-3000, TDD 478-744-2299, or via the Internet at www.USAJOBS.opm.gov.

• If you served on active duty in the United States Military and were separated under honorable conditions, you may be eligible for veterans' preference. To receive preference, if your service began after October 15, 1976, you must have a Campaign Badge, Expeditionary Medal, or a service-connected disability. Veterans' preference is not a factor for Senior Executive Service jobs or when competition is limited to status candidates (current or former career or career-conditional Federal employees).

• Most Federal jobs require United States citizenship and also that males over age 18 born after December 31, 1959, have registered with the Selective Service System or have an exemption.

• The law prohibits public officials from appointing, promoting, or recommending their relatives.

• Federal annuitants (military and civilian) may have their salaries or annuities reduced. Every employee must pay any valid delinquent debt or the agency may garnish their salary.

• Send your application to the office announcing the vacancy. If you have questions, contact the office identified in the announcement.

Privacy Act Statement

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management and other Federal agencies rate applicants for Federal jobs under the authority of sections 1104, 1302, 3301, 3304, 3320, 3361, 3393, and 3394 of title 5 of the United States Code. We need the information requested in this form and in the associated vacancy announcements to evaluate your qualifications. Other laws require us to ask about citizenship, military service, etc. In order to keep your records in order, we request your Social Security Number (SSN) under the authority of Public Law 104-134 (April 26, 1996). This law requires that any person doing business with the Federal government furnish an SSN or tax identification number. This is an amendment to title 31, Section 7701. Failure to furnish the requested information may delay or prevent action on your application. We use your SSN to seek information about you from employers, schools, banks, and others who know you. We may use your SSN in studies and computer matching with other Government files. If you do not give us your SSN or any other information requested, we cannot process your application. Also, incomplete addresses and ZIP Codes will slow processing. We may confirm information from your records with prospective nonfederal employers concerning tenure of employment, civil service status, length of service, and date and nature of action for separation as shown on personnel action forms of specifically identified individuals.

Public Burden Statement

We estimate the public reporting burden for this collection will vary from 20 to 240 minutes with an average of 40 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering data, and completing and reviewing the information. Send comments regarding the burden statement or any other aspect of the collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), OPM Forms Officer, Washington, DC 20415-7900. The OMB number, 3206-0219, is currently valid. OPM may not collect this information and you are not required to respond, unless this number is displayed. Do not send completed application forms to this address. Follow directions provided in the vacancy announcement(s).

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